



July 13, 2017

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia

California State Assembly, District 56
State Capitol, Room
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Cristina Garcia

California State Assembly, District 58
State Capitol, Room
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Miguel Santiago

California State Assembly, District 53
State Capitol, Room
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Assembly Bill 398 (E. Garcia) – SUPPORT
Assembly Bill 617 (C. Garcia, E. Garcia, Santiago) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Members Eduardo Garcia, Cristina Garcia and Miguel Santiago:

The California Biomass Energy Alliance (CBEA), representing California's existing biomass energy facilities producing clean renewable energy in 20 counties throughout state, support AB 398 and AB 617. Together these bills are valuable tools in accelerating emission reductions in the state that target the most economically and environmentally vulnerable regions and extending and enhancing California's cap and trade program to assure the state meets the deep reductions required by SB 32 without causing undue impacts to California's consumers and businesses.

The production of electricity by biomass facilities reduces GHG emissions. California is in the fortunate position of leading the nation in biomass power production through the use of sustainably-sourced organic materials, such as residues and byproducts from forest harvests and farming and biomass materials including wood wastes, to generate utility scale electric and thermal energy. Without biomass facilities, the bulk of these materials would otherwise be open burned, buried in landfills, or allowed to remain in the forest as overgrowth material that diminishes forest health, and poses increased risks of devastating wild fires and insect and disease outbreaks.

Biomass diversion of wood residues/byproducts/wastes into fuel provides a net reduction of over 3.5 million tons of biogenic GHG emissions per year. An additional 1.5 - 3.5 million tons of avoided GHG emissions per year results from the biomass industry's displacement of fossil-fueled generation by the electric utilities. This doesn't take into account the emissions reductions potential of biomass diversion

if further public investments were made to avoid catastrophic wildfire such as the 2013 Rim Fire. According to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, the Rim Fire alone burned 257,000 acres of forest and produced more than 11 million metric tons of GHGs. That equals the annual emissions of 2.3 million cars or 1.2 billion gallons of gasoline. That is equivalent to nearly one-tenth of the state's fuel consumption.

Biomass is a valuable asset to California and an integral tool in meeting its climate and clean energy goals. CBEA believes AB 398 and AB 617 are an appropriate and valuable means to continue GHG emissions reductions post-2020 in the most economic and environmental manner.

Additionally, CBEA urges authors and stakeholders to continue discussions on the offset program, specifically recognizing the significant resources already allocated to forest improvement carbon projects that are listed on the ARB offset project registry. Forest carbon offsets, specifically the ones based in California, represent a great opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

CBEA is proud to support AB 398 and AB 617. Thank you for your strong leadership and commitment to reducing emissions.

Sincerely,



Julee Malinowski Ball, Executive Director
California Biomass Energy Alliance

JMB/kmg

cc:

Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor, State of California
Honorable Kevin de León, President pro Tempore; California State Senate
Honorable Anthony Rendon, Speaker; California State Assembly
Honorable Mary Nichols, Chair; California Air Resources Board
Catalina Hayes-Bautista, Deputy Legislative Secretary; Office of Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Dan Reeves, Chief of Staff; Office of Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León
Carrie Cornwell, Chief of Staff; Office of Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Kip Lipper, Chief Energy & Environment Advisor; Office of Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León
Marie Liu, Consultant; Office of Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Steve Cliff, Senior Advisor; Office of Chair Mary Nichols; California Air Resources Board
Kevin Bassett, Chief of Staff; Office of Senator Patricia Bates, Senate Republican Leader
Seren Taylor, Consultant; Office of Assembly Member Chad Mayes, Assembly Republican Leader
Carlos Gonzalez, Policy Director; Office of Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia
Mandi Strella, Consultant; Office of Assembly Member Cristina Garcia
Jackie Koenig, Chief of Staff; Office of Assembly Member Miguel Santiago
Rachel Machi Wagoner, Chief Consultant; Senate Committee on Environmental Quality
Morgan Branch, Consultant; Senate Republican Caucus
Lawrence Lingbloom, Chief Consultant; Assembly Committee on Natural Resources
John Kennedy, Consultant; Assembly Republican Caucus